

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF
THE TORRANCE PLANNING COMMISSION**

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Torrance Planning Commission convened in a regular session at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, June 20, 2012 in City Council Chambers at Torrance City Hall.

2. SALUTE TO THE FLAG

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Uchima.

3. ROLL CALL/ MOTIONS FOR EXCUSED ABSENCE

Present: Commissioners D'anjou, Polcari, Weideman, Uchima and Chairperson Skoll.

Absent: Commissioners Gibson (excused) and Rizzo (excused).

Also Present: Planning Manager Lodan, Planning Assistant Yumul, Plans Examiner Noh, Sr. Fire Prevention Officer Kazandjian, and Assistant City Attorney Sullivan.

4. POSTING OF THE AGENDA

Planning Manager Lodan reported that the agenda was posted on the Public Notice Board at 3031 Torrance Boulevard on Thursday, June 14, 2012.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: Commissioner Weideman moved for the approval of the May 16, 2012 Planning Commission minutes as submitted. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Polcari and passed by unanimous voice vote, with Commissioner Uchima abstaining (absent Commissioners Gibson and Rizzo).

6. REQUESTS FOR POSTPONEMENTS – None.

7. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS #1 – None.

Chairperson Skoll reviewed the policies and procedures of the Planning Commission, including the right to appeal decisions to the City Council.

8. TIME EXTENSIONS – None.

9. SIGN HEARINGS – None.

10. CONTINUED HEARINGS – None.

11. WAIVERS – None.

12. FORMAL HEARINGS

12A. CUP12-00008, DVP12-00005, WAV12-00006: JULIE OAKES (AZRAO INVESTMENTS LLC)

Planning Commission consideration for approval of Conditional Use Permit to allow additions to an existing commercial building and the operation of a new take-out restaurant, in conjunction with a Waiver of the southerly setback, on property located in the H-PR Zone at 20790 Hawthorne Boulevard.

Planning Manager Lodan relayed the applicant's request to delay this item until later in the meeting because his architect had not arrived, and it was the consensus of the Commission to defer this item and proceed with the rest of the agenda (see pages 4-7).

12B. DIV12-00005: CONTINENTAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (ALEX J. ROSE)

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Division of Lot to allow the subdivision of two existing parcels into three new parcels on properties located in the H-MP Zone at 23220-232340 Hawthorne Boulevard.

Recommendation: Approval.

Planning Assistant Yumul introduced the request and noted supplemental material available at the meeting consisting of a revised condition of approval.

Toni Reina, representing Continental Development Corporation, voiced her agreement with the recommended conditions of approval as revised.

In response to Commissioner Weideman's inquiry, Ms. Reina confirmed that easements that were required in conjunction with previously approved entitlements for this site remain in effect.

MOTION: Commissioner Weideman moved to close the public hearing. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Uchima and passed by unanimous voice vote.

MOTION: Commissioner Weideman moved to approve DIV12-00005, as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff. The motion was seconded by Commissioner D'anjou and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioners Gibson and Rizzo).

Planning Assistant Yumul read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution No. 12-038.

MOTION: Commissioner Weideman moved to adopt Planning Commission Resolution No. 12-038. The motion was seconded by Commissioner D'anjou and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioners Gibson and Rizzo).

13. RESOLUTIONS

13A. MIS11-00265: KARYN MADICK

Planning Commission adoption of a resolution reflecting their decision to grant an appeal and deny a Minor Hillside Exemption to allow single-story additions to an existing one-story, single-family residence, including a garage reorientation, on property located within the Hillside Overlay District in the R-1 Zone at 605 Paseo de los Reyes.

Planning Assistant Yumul read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution No. 12-025 reflecting the Commission's action at the May 16, 2012 meeting.

MOTION: Commissioner Weideman moved to adopt Planning Commission Resolution No. 12-025. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Polcari and passed by a 4-0 roll call vote, with Commissioner Uchima abstaining due to his absence from the May 16 meeting (absent Commissioners Gibson and Rizzo).

The applicant Karyn Chamberlain (formerly Madick), who arrived after Resolution No. 12-025 had been adopted, came forward and asked to be heard.

A brief discussion ensued, and it was the consensus of the Commission to reconsider the item.

MOTION: Commissioner Weideman moved to reconsider Item 13A. The motion was seconded by Commissioner D'anjou and passed by unanimous vote (absent Commissioners Gibson and Rizzo).

Karyn Chamberlain, 605 Paseo de los Reyes, requested that the Commission reconsider the decision to deny MIS11-00265 and consider granting a continuance instead so the plans could be revised, explaining that she had some ideas for reconfiguring the project and may hire another architect. She noted that the original objection to project came from neighbors at 601 Paseo de los Reyes and their concern was the straight-in driveway so she was ill-prepared when another neighbor (609 Paseo de los Reyes – Glenn & Gail Smith) claimed view obstruction at the second hearing on May 16. She suggested that the view obstruction claim also took Commissioners by surprise because none of them had visited the Smiths' home to personally assess the impact. She requested direction on the straight-in driveway issue since it was not clear from Commissioners' comments whether they felt this was something that needed to be changed.

Assistant City Attorney Sullivan confirmed that Ms. Chamberlain's request was within the allowable timeframe for reconsideration of a decision. He advised that action could not be taken this evening therefore if Commissioners wished to entertain the idea of reconsidering their decision to deny the project, a motion should be made to place the matter on a future agenda.

Commissioner Weideman recalled that he had stated his opinion previously that the straight-in driveway has nothing to do with the Hillside Overlay Ordinance. He clarified that he voted to deny the project because he thought it would be more expedient for Ms. Chamberlain to have the matter decided by the City Council.

Ms. Chamberlain stated that she filed an appeal to preserve her rights, but does not want to burden the City Council with the case and hopes it can be resolved at the Planning Commission level.

Commissioner Uchima stated that he had no objection to the straight-in driveway and that he was surprised to learn about the view obstruction claim at the May 16 hearing, having been absent from that meeting. He noted that he usually visits the site when there is a view issue.

Assistant City Attorney Sullivan confirmed that Commissioner Uchima could vote on a motion to reconsider.

Commissioner D'anjou indicated that she also had no objection to the straight-in driveway and recalled that part of the problem at the May 16 meeting was that Ms. Chamberlain's architect was not present to answer Commissioners' questions.

Ms. Chamberlain noted that her architect had mentioned at the May 2 meeting that he was not available on May 16, but she elected to go forward in the hope that the matter could be resolved without him.

A brief discussion ensued, and it was the consensus of the Commission to place the matter on a future agenda.

MOTION: Commissioner Weideman moved to place the reconsideration of the action taken on MIS11-000265 on a future agenda. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Uchima and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioners Gibson and Rizzo).

After Agenda Item 12A was concluded, it was noted that the appellants in this case, James Atkins and Margaret Walker, 601 Paseo de los Reyes, had arrived after the above motion was discussed and approved.

Assistant City Attorney Sullivan briefly reviewed the Commission's action for the benefit of Mr. Atkins and Ms. Walker. He emphasized that when the matter is brought back for a hearing, the only issue to be discussed will be whether or not Commissioners wish to reconsider their denial of the project or let their decision stand and if the Commission votes to reconsider, another hearing will be scheduled to discuss the merits of the project.

Chairperson Skoll requested that the limited scope of the hearing be made clear in the notice sent out to neighboring property owners.

12A. CUP12-00008, DVP12-00005, WAV12-00006: JULIE OAKES (AZRAO INVESTMENTS LLC)

Planning Commission consideration for approval of Conditional Use Permit to allow additions to an existing commercial building and the operation of a new take-out restaurant, in conjunction with a Waiver of the southerly setback, on property located in the H-PR Zone at 20790 Hawthorne Boulevard.

Recommendation: Approval.

Planning Assistant Yumul introduced the request and noted supplemental material consisting of a revised condition of approval (No. 25) and a correction to a Code Requirement.

Julie Oakes, project architect, stated that she agreed with the conditions of approval with the following exceptions:

Condition No. 6 - *Requires the removal of the existing 500 square foot storage building* – She explained that the applicant would like to retain the building and use it as a trash enclosure and for the storage of recyclable materials.

Planning Manager Lodan advised that staff recommended removal of the building because it interferes with on-site circulation and while staff does not object to the concept of using the building to house trash bins and recyclables, it's quite large to be used for that purpose.

Zabair Rao, representing Azrao Investments, applicant, reported that he will need a considerable amount of space to store electronic equipment for recycling in conjunction with his business.

Planning Manager Lodan stated that staff would prefer that the building be removed, but will work with the applicant on downsizing it if the Commission does not believe it would be a hindrance to on-site circulation. He offered revised language for Condition No. 6, which would allow the storage building to be repurposed, reduced, relocated or removed, and Ms. Oakes agreed to the revised condition.

Condition No. 12 – *Requires the construction of a landscaped planter along the northerly property line* – Ms. Oakes expressed concerns about the expense involved.

Planning Manager Lodan explained that there is a need to separate the subject property from the parcel to the north and staff felt a landscaped planter would be better than a fence.

Ms. Oakes related her understanding that the property to the north was going to be remodeled and suggested that the expense of delineating the property line should be shared with the adjacent property owner. Planning Manager Lodan clarified that the planter would be entirely on the applicant's property.

Ms. Oakes proposed using concrete curbing to create a planter, which would also act as a wheel stop, and Planner Manage Lodan confirmed that this was acceptable to staff.

Condition No. 20 – *Requires a noise report to be performed by a professional acoustical consultant and the preparation of a noise attenuation plan.* Ms. Oakes questioned the need for a noise report since this will be a retail use.

Planning Manager Lodan advised that this is a standard condition for all commercial projects to ensure compliance with the City's noise ordinance, and Ms. Oakes agreed to this condition.

Referring to the list of Code Requirements, Ms. Oakes requested relief from the requirement that the applicant install a new parkway on Emerald Street since the City will be digging in this area in order to underground utilities.

Chairperson Skoll noted that the Planning Commission may not waive or alter Code Requirements.

Planning Manager Lodan advised that there have been instances where relief has been granted in cases like this and the City typically would not require an applicant to plant a parkway that will have to be torn out. He noted, however, that the applicant will be required to close the abandoned driveway on Emerald and install curb and gutter.

Planning Manager Lodan requested that Condition No. 26, which requires a 10-foot wide dedication on Emerald Street for street improvements, be modified since there is a possibility the City will not need the entire 10 feet.

Ms. Oakes voiced her agreement to the recommended conditions of approval as revised, including the revisions to Condition No. 25 in the supplemental material.

Chairperson Skoll asked about the proposed take-out restaurant.

Ms. Oakes explained that the applicant wants to develop the site to its highest potential so the take-out restaurant was included; that no restaurant has expressed an interest as of yet; and that there may be two retail uses instead or the applicant's business might be so successful, he will take over the entire building.

Chairperson Skoll emphasized that there may be no seating in the restaurant due to the limited parking, and Ms. Oakes confirmed that the applicant was aware of this restriction.

Noting that Condition No. 10 requires the applicant to work with staff to improve on-site circulation, Commissioner Weideman voiced his opinion that the circulation as proposed was cumbersome due to the one-way drive aisle.

Ms. Oakes expressed her willingness to continue to work with Transportation and Planning staff on this issue. She voiced her opinion that having traffic enter on Emerald and exit on Hawthorne Boulevard as proposed was preferable to reversing this flow as staff has suggested because it would avoid any vehicle queuing on Hawthorne Boulevard.

MOTION: Commissioner Uchima moved to close the public hearing. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Polcari and passed by unanimous voice vote.

MOTION: Commissioner Polcari moved to approve CUP12-00008, DVP12-00005, and WAV12-00006, as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff, with the following modifications:

Modify

No. 6 That the applicant shall **repurpose, reduce, relocate or** remove the existing 500 square foot building located along the north property line prior to occupancy.

No. 25 That the applicant shall remove the existing 7' wide concrete sidewalk adjacent to the curb on Hawthorne Boulevard and construct grass sod ~~with irrigation system~~ or other approved landscaping **with irrigation system** in the parkway area along property frontage.

No. 26 That applicant shall dedicate property for the purpose of street and highway improvements (right turn lane) on Emerald Street, specifically a ~~40-foot wide~~ **an up to 10-foot wide** dedication along the entire length of property frontage on Emerald Street.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Uchima and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioners Gibson and Rizzo).

Commissioner Weideman reiterated his concern about on-site circulation and encouraged staff and the applicant to work diligently on improving it.

Commissioner Uchima echoed concerns about the one-way drive aisle.

Planning Assistant Yumul read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution Nos. 12-036, 12-037 and 12-039.

MOTION: Commissioner Polcari moved to adopt Planning Commission Resolution Nos. 12-036, 12-037 and 12-039 as amended. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Uchima and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioners Gibson and Rizzo).

14. PUBLIC WORKSHOP ITEMS – None.

15. MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

15A. PLANNING COMMISSION ELECTIONS

Chairperson Skoll proposed that Commissioner Uchima serve as Chairperson until his term expires next January, with Commissioner Weideman to serve as Vice-Chair.

A brief discussion ensued and Commissioners noted their agreement with Chairperson Skoll's proposal.

MOTION: Commissioner Skoll moved to elect Commissioner Uchima as Chair and Commissioner Weideman as Vice-Chair. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Polcari and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioners Gibson and Rizzo).

16. REVIEW OF CITY COUNCIL ACTION ON PLANNING MATTERS

Planning Manager Lodan reported that the City Council approved the Commission's annual report at the June 19 City Council meeting.

Chairperson Skoll and Commissioner Weideman requested copies of the approved report.

17. LIST OF TENTATIVE PLANNING COMMISSION CASES

Planning Manager Lodan reported that the Commission will not meet on Wednesday, July 4, and the agenda for the July 18 meeting has not been set.

18. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS #2

18A. Commissioner Uchima commended Chairperson Skoll for doing an excellent job of presiding over meetings over the past year.

18B. Commissioner D'anjou also commended Chairperson Skoll and thanked him for generously sharing his advice since she joined the Commission earlier this year.

18C. Commissioner D'anjou requested that staff provide her with a copy of an acoustical report so she would have a better understanding of what it includes.

18D. Commissioner Weideman thanked Chairperson Skoll for his service.

18E. Chairperson Skoll reported that he has heard rumors that hangars are going to be built on the area of the airport that was formerly farmed by the Ishibashi family.

Assistant City Attorney Sullivan advised that the area in question is in the Runway Protection Zone so nothing can be built on it and staff was in the process of preparing an RFP (request for proposal) to solicit another agricultural use.

18F. Referring to the report Commissioners receive on administrative approvals, Chairperson Skoll requested that the reason for the Time Extension be included in the report when one is administratively approved.

18G. Chairperson Skoll commented that he greatly enjoyed his tenure as Chairperson.

19. ADJOURNMENT

At 8:45 p.m., the meeting was adjourned to Wednesday, July 18, 2012 at 7:00 p.m.

Approved as Submitted August 1, 2012 s/ Sue Herbers, City Clerk
